

**Washington D.C.** – Congressman Duncan Hunter, a member of the House Armed Services Committee, today highlighted a report by the bipartisan Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) Independent Panel, which calls for increasing the size of the Navy to a 346-ship fleet and expanding America's focus to prepare for threats in the Western Pacific.

"The message from the independent QDR panel about the strength and size of our naval fleet must be taken seriously," said Congressman Hunter. "There are some in Congress and the Administration who believe that cutting defense spending is a good idea amid ongoing engagements and the resurgence of conventional threats. The QDR panel rightly identifies the importance of preparing our military to meet future threats – and the capability of the Navy will largely dictate our ability to project force worldwide.

"And a larger Navy not only benefits national security, but also the San Diego community. San Diego is a principal homeport for the U.S. Naval fleet. Adding more ships to the Navy's inventory would help strengthen the local economy and provide new opportunities for San Diego workers.

"I've been a strong proponent of expanding the current fleet of 282 ships to 313 ships, the production goal of the current shipbuilding plan for the next decade, and even increasing production numbers as necessary. The QDR panel's recommendation of 346 ships offers a far more appropriate balance and I fully support moving towards that target."